

DNREC Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police promoting Operation Dry Water June 29-July 1

DOVER – DNREC Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police today announced their active participation in Operation Dry Water, an annual nationwide enforcement and education campaign aimed at preventing alcohol and drug-related boating accidents and fatalities.

Over the June 29-July 1 weekend, Fish & Wildlife officers will increase their presence on Delaware's waterways to educate boaters on the danger and risk of operating a vessel while their blood alcohol level exceeds the state and federal limit of 0.08 percent. Boat operators found to be at or above the limit will be arrested and may have their vessel impounded, as well as face fines and potential jail time for operating under the influence (OUI). Enforcement efforts against OUI also will be intensified during the Operation Dry Water campaign.

According to national statistics released by the U.S. Coast Guard, alcohol use is a leading contributing factor to fatal boating accidents. To avoid putting themselves, their passengers and other boaters at risk, boat operators are urged to stay sober and follow safe boating practices, or to plan ahead by having a non-drinking, qualified designated boat operator on board if alcohol is consumed.

"We are dedicated to ensuring the safety of all who enjoy our waters. Not only during this campaign but throughout the year, our officers check for those who may be operating their boats under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Have a responsible and qualified operator at the helm, and don't drink and boat,"

said Chief Drew Aydelotte, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police.

During Operation Dry Water in 2017, Delaware officers made 3,095 contacts with boat operators and passengers and conducted 587 boardings while performing standard vessel safety checks and encouraging safe boating practices for boat operations and carrying required safety equipment. Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police spent a total of 211.5 hours on the water during this timeframe. Sixteen citations were issued, helping to raise awareness of and reduce unsafe boating practices, with two of the citations issued for OUI.

For more information, visit [Delaware Boating Safety](#) or contact Delaware Boating Safety & Education Coordinator Sgt. Brooke Africa at 302-739-9915 or email brooke.africa@delaware.gov.

Operation Dry Water is coordinated nationwide by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), in partnership with state marine enforcement agencies and the U.S. Coast Guard. For more information on Operation Dry Water visit: <http://www.operationdrywater.org/>

Like Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police on Facebook, www.facebook.com/pages/Delaware-Fish-Wildlife-Natural-Resources-Police.

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